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West Coast Australia



Brett Atkinson Carolyn Bain, Steve Waters

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If you've got limited time, this itinerary offers a taste of the best of the state – city life, colonial history, beaches, wildlife, wine, forests and rural roads.

Base yourself in either **Perth** or **Fremantle** and spend three days exploring the conjoined cities and one day on **Rottnest Island**. Hire a car and head south, stopping first at **Bunbury** for lunch and a visit to the Dolphin Discovery Centre. Continue on to **Geographe Bay**, basing yourself in either **Busselton** or **Dunsborough**, and use the rest of the day to explore the beaches. Pick up a wine-region map and spend day six checking out the wineries, surf beaches and caves, all of which are close by. Base yourself in the **Margaret River** township that night and visit Settler's Tavern, the local pub. The next morning, head to **Augusta** via Caves Rd and take the scenic detour through the karri forest along unsealed **Boranup Drive**. Visit **Cape Leeuwin**, where the Indian and Southern Oceans meet, before heading back to Bunbury on a picturesque rural drive through **Nannup** and **Balingup**. From here it's a two-hour drive back to Perth.



Above: Kangaroos, Margaret River (p130) Right: Little Creatures brewery (p94), Fremantle



PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES







Above: Rottnest Island (p98) Left: Wave Rock (p107)



Australia's southwest is a magical part of the continent and this itinerary covers its main highlights. Take another week to really relax into it.

Spend three days in **Perth** and **Fremantle** and a leisurely day on **Rottnest Island**. Head south to Geographe Bay – stopping at **Bunbury** first to visit the Dolphin Discovery Centre – before overnighting in **Busselton** or **Dunsborough**. Continue for two nights in **Margaret River** township to explore breweries, wineries, surf beaches and caves.

The following morning head to **Augusta** via Caves Rd and detour through the karri forest along scenic **Boranup Drive**. Visit **Cape Leeuwin**, where the Indian and Southern Oceans meet, and continue to sleepy **Pemberton**. Highlights include more wineries, three national parks and the Karri Forest Explorer scenic drive. The next day, visit the extraordinary **Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk** near Walpole and overnight in **Denmark**. Check out beaches, wineries, breweries and good restaurants before continuing to **Albany**. Spend two days there swimming (in summer), whale watching (in winter), and exploring coastal national parks and the poignant National Anzac Centre.

Head north for more wineries at **Mt Barker** before tracking east to **Porongurup National Park**. Spend the next day (or two) tackling the mountainous tracks either here or at **Stirling Range National Park**.

From here the driving distances get longer. Continue to the South Coast Hwy and at Ravensthorpe hop down to **Hopetoun**. This takes three hours from the Stirling Range, so spend the afternoon at the beach. The following day, head back to the South Coast Hwy and continue east to **Esperance** (around 2½ hours). Base yourself there two days, spending one of them exploring **Cape Le Grand National Park**.

Head back on the South Coast Hwy and turn north just past Ravensthorpe for **Hyden** and extraordinary **Wave Rock** – around four hours.

The following day, head west to Brookton, turn north on the Great Southern Hwy, and follow the Avon Valley to quaintly colonial **York** – allow 3¹/₂ hours. For a leisurely final day back to Perth, travel via **Mundaring**, stopping at the **Swan Valley** en route for craft beer.

To make this itinerary shorter, head straight to Hyden from the Stirling Range, or take the Albany Hwy directly to Perth from Mt Barker.

The biggest adventure in the west leaves **Broome** during the Dry and traverses the heart of the rugged Kimberley by 4WD.

The Gibb River Road & Kimberley Outback

First stop is the **Dampier Peninsula**, with its Aboriginal communities, beautiful beaches and mud crabs, and your last saltwater swim. Take the back road to **Derby** and its boabs, then on to the **Gibb River Road**, where **Lennard River** is the first of many inviting gorges. Explore wildlife and gorges at **Mt Hart** and remote **Mornington Wilderness Camp**, and look for examples of Wandjina art at **Galvans Gorge** and **Mt Elizabeth Station**. Turn off onto the **Kalumburu Road**, check the road conditions at **Drysdale River** and drive on to the **Mitchell Plateau**, with its forests of *livistona* and mind-blowing falls. Marvel at the area's rock art before hitting the northern coast and excellent fishing at **Honeymoon Bay**, just beyond the mission community of **Kalumburu**.

It's all downhill from here as you retrace your route back to the Gibb, then turn left for wonderful **Home Valley Station**, where someone else can do the cooking and the soft beds make a pleasant change from camping. Nearby **El Questro** has gorges aplenty, none more beautiful than **Emma Gorge**. Soon you're back on asphalt, but not for long as you take in the amazing bird life of **Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve**. Let Wyndham's **Five Rivers Lookout** blow your mind with its view of Cambridge Gulf, before heading for the civility of **Kununura**, with its excellent food and supplies. You can look for fruit-picking work, ride a canoe down the mighty **Ord River**, or jump back behind the wheel for the wonders of **Purnululu National Park** and the orange-domed **Bungle Bungle Range**.

Darwin and the Northern Territory are beckoning, or you can follow the Great Northern Hwy back to Broome, stopping in at beautiful **Geikie Gorge** for a relaxing boat cruise where you might spot freshwater crocs. If you don't see any, don't worry, as nearby **Windjana Gorge** has loads sunning themselves on the river banks. Grab your torch and head for a cold wade through the icy waters of **Tunnel Creek**, with its bats and rock art, before planting the pedal back to Broome, where you won't care how much that beer costs any more.

PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES







Above: Windjana Gorge (p223) Right: Boab trees in Derby (p220) PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES

PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES





Above: Hamersley Gorge (p201), Karijini National Park

Left: Dolphins, Monkey Mia (p179)

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Indian Ocean Dreaming

Exmouth Ningaloo Marine Park Coral Bav Gnaraloo

Carnaryon C

Ra Monkey MiaC

Hamelin Pool

Kalbarri

Geraldton

Green Head

Pinnacles Desert

Beautiful beaches, spectacular sunsets and diverse wildlife are constants on this coastal cruise.

Lesueur

Park

OPerth

Take Indian Ocean Dr north from Perth to Cervantes for sunset on the otherwordly Pinnacles Desert. Cruise the wildflowerladen Kwongan back roads and marvel at the flora at Lesueur National Park before snorkelling with sea lions at Green Head. Follow the flowers out to **Perenjori**, then hit the cafes and museums of Geraldton. Go kitesurfing, then move on to the wonderful Kalbarri coastline. Enjoy a canoe in the gorges before sampling the outback on the long drive to World Heritage-listed Shark Bay. Watch dolphins at Monkey **Mia**, go sailing with dugongs, and learn about 'Country' on an Indigenous cultural tour. Check out the stromatolites of Hamelin Pool, before putting in more road time on the stretch north to Carnarvon. Drop into **Gnaraloo** for world-class waves before arriving at tiny Coral Bay and **Exmouth**, where whale sharks, humpback whales, manta rays and turtles inhabit the exquisite Ningaloo Marine Park. You can fly out of Exmouth, drive back to Perth in two days (overnighting in historic Greenough), or push on to the gorges of Karijini.



You'll camp most of the way on this link between Ningaloo and Broome, with long empty beaches, shady pools and surprisingly good food.

From **Exmouth**, take Burkett Rd back to the highway, and head north, turning off at Nanutarra for the long, scenic haul up to **Tom Price**. After stocking up, spend the next few days camped in Karijini National Park, exploring the sublime gorges and indulging in a spot of peak bagging among the state's highest mountains. Don't miss a swim at Hamersley Gorge en route to the relaxing, shady pools in Millstream Chichester National Park. Admire the mesas and breakaways of the Chichester Range before dropping down to the coast, checking out the petroglyphs at Murujuga, then onto lovely **Point Sam**son for snorkelling. Take the North West Coastal Hwy directly to Port Hedland. and indulge in city treats before camping at remote Eighty Mile Beach, where you might spot nesting turtles. Your last leg is a long stretch of nothing as you skirt the Great Sandy Desert to arrive in tropical Broome.



PLAN YOUR TRIP OFF THE BEATEN TRACK



PLAN YOUR TRIP OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- 🕐 Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- 🔂 Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- C Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kavaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- G Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking 6
- € Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

🚫 Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

Drinking & Nightlife Cafe

Entertainment

Entertainment

Shopping

Shopping

Information

Bank

- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- @ Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- ▶< Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- ▲ Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
-) (Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- +++ Cable car/Funicular
- - Cycling
- C Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
 - Parking Petrol station
 - Subway station
 - Taxi
- +- Train station/Railway
- Tram
 - Underground station
 - Other Transport

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book

Routes

Tollway Freeway Primary Secondary Tertiary I ane Unsealed road Road under construction Plaza/Mall Steps) = = = Tunnel Pedestrian overpass Walking Tour Walking Tour detour Path/Walking Trail

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Boundaries

--- International --- State/Province - Disputed Regional/Suburb Marine Park Cliff - Wall

Hydrography



Areas

Airport/Runway Beach/Desert Cemetery (Christian) Cemetery (Other) Glacier Mudflat siliz Park/Forest Sight (Building) Sportsground Swamp/Mangrove siliz

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OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap.* Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Brett Atkinson

Perth & Fremantle, Around Perth, Margaret River & the Southwest Coast, Southern WA For this edition, Brett uncovered new restaurants, bars and distilleries in Perth and Fremantle, and jumped from beach to forest and back to beach throughout Margaret River and the southwest. In Albany, a poignant highlight was the National Anzac Centre telling the story of brave WWI soldiers. Brett has contributed to Lonely Planet guidebooks spanning Europe, Africa, Asia,

the United States and the Pacific, and covered over 60 countries as a food and travel writer. See www.brett-atkinson.net for his latest adventures. Brett also wrote the Plan Your Trip, Understand (other than History) and Survival Guide chapters.



Carolyn Bain

Monkey Mia & the Central West, Ningaloo Coast & the Pilbara A travel writer and editor for 16 years, Carolyn has lived, worked and studied in various corners of the globe, including London, Denmark, St Petersburg and Nantucket. She is regularly drawn north from her base in Melbourne, Australia to cover diverse destinations for Lonely Planet, from dusty outback Australia to luminous Greek islands, by way of Maine's lobster shacks and Slovenia's alpine lakes. The Nordic

region stakes a large claim to her heart, with repeated visits to Iceland and Denmark for work and pleasure.

Carolyn writes about travel and food for a range of publishers; see carolynbain.com.au for more.



Steve Waters

Broome & the Kimberley Travel and adventure have always been Steve's life, he couldn't imagine a world without them. He's been using Lonely Planet guidebooks for over 30 years in places as diverse as Iran, Central Asia, Kamchatka, Tuva, the Himalaya, Canada, Patagonia, the Australian Outback, NE Asia, Myanmar and the Sahara. Little wonder then that he finally got a gig with the company he was supporting! He's contributed to Iran, Indonesia and the past 4

editions of Western Australia and come any September you're likely to find him in a remote gorge somewhere in the Kimberley.

Travel gives you a unique view of the world. Patience, acceptance, resourcefulness and flexibility are all lessons well learnt. Plans change, where some people see obstacles, others see possibilities. Go with an open mind. But go!

Contributing Writer

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